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AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY IN MOLDOVA AND MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The effect of pollution on the World and the alarming rate of technological development has obliged us to do something to protect environment. That the economy of the world has grown five times since 1950, and the population of the world has reached 5.5 billion from 2.6 million, the biological diversity and natural resources are at risk. Furthermore, this risk gained speed because of extensive consuming. Forests are in the first place that affected by this devastation. It can be clearly seen that forests are being destroyed every single day. Forests are destroyed not only by axes, and machines but also factories, gas that comes out of power plants and cars. Particularly, in Europe the effect of acid rains and pollution on forests and agricultural fields is widely known.

Another effect of pollution is changes in climate. Many parts of the world are becoming desert because of global warming caused by changes in climate. The damage in the ozone layer scares people and people prevent themselves from sunlight. The increase of pollution effects vegetation and agriculture. Despite all these troubles human beings have to continue their lives. Compared with European countries agriculture in Balkan countries is reassuring. This study provides some useful information about two distinguished countries of Balkan in terms of forestry and agriculture.

Moldova

The Republic of Moldova is a small European country with an area of 33.700 sq km and with a population of 4.5 million. The Republic of Moldova, in Eastern Europe, located between Romania to the west and Ukraine to the north, east, and south. The capital city is Chişinău with a population of 779.000. It declared itself an independent country after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Some other big cities are Tiraspol (160.000) and Beltz (148.000).

Economy of the country depends on agriculture and food industry. % 35 of the employed people work on farms and % 28 of the employed people work in industry. In fertile lands of Moldova people grow fruit and vegetables. For many years viticulture in Moldova has been the general occupation of the population. The most

important agricultural products are wheat, corn, bean, nut, sunflower, tobacco, and white beet.

The Republic of Moldova mostly gave a lot of importance to production of food products during the Soviet Union Era. All production factors were used for food production. Moldova played a significant role in meeting the needs of fruit and vegetables of the Soviet Union. The climate and the fertile lands of the country made great contribution to agriculture.

% 50 percent of the exported goods are agricultural products. Before 1991, Moldova produced % 30 of the tobacco, % 20 of the grapes, and % 10 the fruit and vegetables that the Soviet Union needed. After independence agriculture again has always been an important factor of country's economy. Among the agricultural products of the country are wheat, white beet, sunflower, potatoes, vegetables (tomatoes, pepper, onion, cabbage) and fruit (apple, grape, apricot, peach, plum). Grapes production has been the most important export goods in the country. Seeds of sunflowers are used for the country's oil production and 110 thousand tons of sugar is produced annually from white beet. But when some financial difficulties and disinvestment troubles are taken into consideration and due to weather conditions, the contribution of agricultural products to the country economy is changeable.

In 2/3 of the plantation in Moldova wheat and leguminous plants are grown, and among them corn is in the first place. Among the crop plants that consist of % 20 of the plantation, sunflower and white beet are in the first place. On the other hand tobacco production in the country is less than the previous years and in 2006 the decrease of tobacco production went on at a rate of % 25.5 and consisted of 4 thousand hectare of the whole plantation. In other words the tobacco production in 2006 decreased % 29. The prohibition on agricultural products of Moldova by Russia and sudden changes in the climate has caused this decrease. Even the incentive pay given by the government in 2006 didn't help to increase tobacco production. But the plantation in the country in 2006 increased and production of vegetables grew at a rate of % 15 and production of forage plants grew at a rate of % 12.6.

Some important agricultural products of Moldova are wheat, leguminous, sunflower, white beet, potatoes, vegetables, fruit and grapes.

Compared with 2005, production in agricultural products in 2006 decreased. In 2006 except for corn, wheat and leguminous production decreased % 27.6, wheat production decreased % 34.2, corn production decreased % 11.3 caused a % 19 decrease in the production of wheat and leguminous. Similarly, tobacco production decreased % 28.6, fruit production decreased % 13.7, grapes production decreased % 10.4. On the other hand, sunflower production increased % 14.5, white beet production increased % 19.2, vegetables production increased % 22.9. When the contribution of agriculture to the economy and unemployment problem is taken into consideration agriculture in the country is extremely important. Wine and food

industry, and beverages in the country holds an important place in that they meet the needs of the population and at the same time they are exported. Among the problems of agriculture, small plants cannot use enough fertilizers and disinfection owing to financial problems. That agricultural and fruit fields and vineyards are given to people in small parts, machinery is not used in agriculture, and wrong irrigation methods have caused decrease of fertility in agriculture in the country.

Forestry

In Moldova natural gas is reached to every part of the country so heating and energy needs are met via natural gas. For this reason Moldova has a lot of forests. People do not use forestry products to meet their daily needs. The government has serious laws to protect forestry in the country. For example cutting a tree is possible only through a permission from the government. People are not allowed to cut trees in the forests unless some legal procures are followed.

Macedonia

Official name of the country: The Republic of Macedonia

Capital city: Skopija

Local name: Republika Makedonija, FYROM

Regime: Republic, independence day: 17 September 1991 (after dissolution of Yugoslavia)

Constitution: The constitution, accepted on 17 September 1991, forms the legal basis of the country.

After the objection of Greece the name of the country in international institutions is Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia.

Agricultural Products

The economy of the country depends on agricultural products, forestry and mining. The country is the source of fruit and vegetables of Europe because of its well irrigated plains. Some important agricultural products are wheat, corn, grape, potatoes, tobacco, cotton, sesame, rice, plum, and hash.

Fruit

The amount of areas fruit is grown in Macedonia is 43,4 thousand hectare. % 62 of this area is used for grape growing, and % 18 apple, % 7 plum, % 5 black cherry, % 3 peach, % 2 pear, % 1 apricot and % 1 cherry.

Fertility in the agricultural fields in terms of quality and quantity has recently decreased in the country due to wrong irrigation methods. Fruit producers are not organized. Fruit industry is not supported by the government financially and technically, for that reason the decrease in fruit production affects the economy of the country. Special fruit gardens consist of % 84 of the fruit production fields. From June till October % 85 of the fruit producers sell their products at the lowest price. Apple production consists of % 16 of the fruit production. Particularly fruit fields are by Resen and Ohrid lakes, and in this region 70 thousand tons of fruit is produced. It is the most exported fruit. Plum production consists of % 5 of the fruit production and mostly produced in the east of the country. A great amount of the plum is used for wine production. A small amount is exported. Peach production consists of % 2 of the fruit production. Recently a great amount of peach is exported to Russia and Ukraina. Cherry and black cherry are generally produced in Tetovo. Compared with big fruit production, these small fruit production is more productive. Water melon production which holds an important place in fruit production in Macedonia, has decreased in the recent years, because people prefer growing early vegetable instead of growing water melon. Strawberry, blackberry, raspberry production is low. These fruit is grown usually naturally in Pehcevo. % 50 of the production is sold in the country and the rest is bought by factories and exported. Particularly in the recent years raspberry production is growing rapidly and can be easily marketed. Subtropical fruit (pomegranate, fig, kiwi) is grown in the south of the country, and most of the production is sold in the domestic market.

Grapes is important for Macedonian economy. Producing grapes provides people employment and at the same time grapes export makes great contribution to country economy. Viticulture is very common in the country. Wine is the first among the export of beverages, and the second among the export of agricultural products.

Through climate and natural conditions, the quality of the grapes in Macedonia is high and has a % 22-30 potential export rate. In Macedonia there are not enough plants to group, pack, cool and extend life of grapes. Both domestic market and competitive conditions of export market enable grapes to be used in wine industry. The majority of the grapes in Macedonia is used for production of white wine. Among the white grapes, Smederavka type which is not preferred to eat is suitable to make wines and in % 60 of viticultures this type of grapes is grown. Among the red grapes Vranec type is suitable to make wines and in % 20 of viticultures this type of wine is grown. In Macedonia because of disinvestment trees in viticultures are old and this situation risks wine industry in the country.

Vegetables

Main vegetable production areas in the country are the south part where the Mediterranean climate is seen. These cities are Strumitsa and Gevgeli; moreover, in Skopija and Kumanovo where continental climate is seen vegetables are grown too.

Along with potatoes vegetables are important agricultural products of Macedonia. Agricultural products are grown in horticultural glass, and plastic tunnels. Growing in horticultural glass is profitable since cultivating occurs a month before the neighboring countries so products are sold with a high price until April or May. Tomatoes, pepper, and cucumber are grown either in horticultural glass, and plastic tunnels through simple producing techniques and computer controlled techniques. In Strumitsa some horticultural glass are heated with thermal energy.

In these cities potatoes production is in the first place, and respectively followed by peppers, beans, cabbages, onions, and garlic. The production of potatoes is in the first place at a rate of % 26, and respectively followed by tomatoes at a rate of % 18, pepper and other vegetables (cabbage, cucumber, eggplant, cauliflower, lettuce, leek) at a rate of % 17.

Lately, in addition to these fruit and vegetables, broccoli, brussels sprout, chine cabbage, asparagus production is growing in the country and is easily marketed. This contributes to the economy of the country more as these vegetables are more profitable. Flower production in the country is another growing sector. Macedonia with its clean nature, climate and geographical conditions is famous for its aromatic and sanative plants. Plant oil, solution production contributes 10 million \$ to the economy of the country.

Macedonia is an export country of fruit and vegetables. Vegetable export is performed by local wholesale firms. Big firms market their own products. Export of some vegetables such as tomatoes, pepper, cabbage, cucumber is high. Vegetables and fruit products are exported to some UN countries: Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Greece, and Germany. The cultivation in Macedonia is earlier than the neighboring countries so products are sold higher.

Forestry

Compared with Moldova, Macedonia does not have gas resources so people need forest products to meet their heat and energy needs, for that reason the amount of forestry in the country is becoming less. The government organizes forestation campaigns.